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[REDACTED] 25X1

Middle East Situation Report #34 25X1
(as of 1100 EST, 10 February 1984) 25X1

LEBANON/SYRIA

[REDACTED] low level fighting is now concentrated along the "Green Line" separating Muslim/Druze-controlled West Beirut and Christian/LAF-controlled East Beirut. Amal leader Barri is trying, apparently with some success, to calm the situation. Government authority has evaporated and Army units apparently have disintegrated in West Beirut. LAF units in East Beirut remain in static defensive positions. [REDACTED] 25X1

[REDACTED] there is no movement toward a political settlement. Druze leader Junblatt, and Barri, less aggressively, continue to demand Gemayel's resignation. [REDACTED] 25X1 25X1

-- Damascus press reports say the head of the Lebanese Communist Party has now called for Gemayel to step down. [REDACTED] 25X1

Ambassador Bartholomew says Gemayel, encouraged by US military actions and by moderate statements by Muslim religious leaders, plans to stay on as president.

-- Gemayel said he plans to name a six-member interim cabinet of technicians--possibly tomorrow--tasked with getting Geneva II talks off the ground later this month. He claims he cannot name a prime minister for a "real" government of national unity until there is a solution to the situation in West Beirut. 25X1

-- Gemayel and LAF Commander Tannous continue to press the US to support an Army offensive to block the infiltration route through the Alayh ridgeline. [REDACTED] 25X1

Israeli warplanes bombed Palestinian targets in the Bhamdun area east of Beirut this morning probably in retaliation for the rocket attack yesterday on Metulla. [REDACTED] 25X1 25X1

[REDACTED] report an impending Druze/Palestinian attack on Lebanese Army positions near Qabr Shamun and against Lebanese Forces units in the Kharrub. The reported objective of such an attack would be to acquire a port and powerplant for the currently landlocked Druze. 25X1 25X1

-- A Druze attack in the Kharrub would be impossible without Israeli permission and Israel so far has vetoed any Druze move in the area, fearing it would result in the massacre of Christians. [REDACTED] 25X1 25X1

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IRAN-IRAQ WAR

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President Khamenei has become the latest of several ranking Tehran officials to visit recently the militarily sensitive coastal areas of southeastern Iran. In a speech yesterday at an Air Force base near Chah Bahar, he asserted that active US involvement in the Iran-Iraq war would lead Tehran to "stop" the flow of oil through the Straits of Hormuz. [REDACTED]

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PERSIAN GULF

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Our embassy in the UAE reports that its contacts [REDACTED] have underscored "very important" economic considerations that currently affect Tokyo's reluctance to take on any formal mediation of the Iran-Iraq conflict. Iran is said to be heavily discounting (around \$1 per barrel below OPEC prices) its oil in sales to the Japanese at Kharg Island. By not risking Tehran's ire by undertaking a mediation effort, the Japanese are viewed as seeking to ensure their access to Iranian oil while enhancing their leverage vis-a-vis other Gulf suppliers. [REDACTED]

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Arab ambassadors met in Paris yesterday to consider their security situation following the murder of the UAE's chief envoy on Wednesday. Their French hosts have already tightened protection, but the ambassadors will still go ahead with a formal request for "new, urgent measures." [REDACTED]

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[redacted] the assassination
was probably a Syrian-sponsored Abu Nidal (Black June)
act. [redacted]

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Iranian-owned ferry service between Iran (Bandar Abbas) and the UAE (Sharjah) is to commence tomorrow on a twice-weekly basis. Security officials in the UAE view the venture as probably unprofitable and see Tehran's primary motive as potentially subversive--Sharjah is likely to be lax in policing entries, and visitors could move easily from there to Dubai or Abu Dhabi by taking advantage of the elimination of passport and border controls within the Emirates. [redacted]

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